Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

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"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;
And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."
JOHN HAY.

On Picket Duty.

A free labor reading room and circulating library was opened a few weeks ago in New York at the Central Labor Union Hall, at which free access may be had to all labor publications. Donations for this praiseworthy institution should be sent to the "New York Labor Library, 141 Eighth Street, New York, N. Y."

"La Presse" of Montreal has issued an illustrated pamphlet of nearly one hundred pages giving an interesting account of the life, trial, and execution of Louis Riel. It is the most intelligible and satisfactory exposition yet published of the causes which induced this brave man to lead his countrymen in insurrection against British tyranny, and of the fanaticism and duplicity which made him suffer a martyr's death upon the scaffold. Those who read French and admire human heroism will want this pamphlet, which the Mutual News Company of Boston supplies at ten cents. I must add my regret, however, that its very first page should be disfigured by a most outrageous lie. Comparing the treatment of Riel with the clemency shown by other nations to political offenders, it says: "France, after the horrors of the Commune, punished with death only the bandits who had personally committed acts of murder and pillage." In view of the undeniable fact that in the famous Bloody Week of May, after the entrance of Thiers and his troops into Paris, men, women, and children were tied together indiscriminately and mowed down with the mitrailleuse until the streets became so many red rivers in which at least thirty thousand corpses almost floated, the man must be cynical indeed who can talk of France's mercy. There has been no such butchery since the days of the Inquisition in Spain.

Henry Appleton has become the editor of "The Newsman," the monthly organ of the newsdealers published by the Mutual News Company of Boston. In it he will wage steady and unrelenting war upon monopolies in general and the American News Company in particular. While in Liberty he will continue to do the same incomparable work that he has been doing ever since its start, his new capacity will greatly extend his sphere of usefulness. I wish him all success in it. Will he pardon me if I add that I look with grave doubts upon his advice to newsdealers to join the Knights of Labor? His own powerful pen has often clearly pointed out in these columns the evils of that organization and of all others similar to it. He has shown them to be the embodiment of "bossism." I hope he will not let the wide swath which the Knights of Labor are just now cutting unduly impress him. The seeming magnitude of immediate results should never induce a man of intellect to encourage principles and methods the ultimate evil consequences of which are sure to far outweigh all temporary benefits. A significant hint of what may be expected from the Knights of Labor is to be found in the address of Grand Master Powderly, the head and front of that body, before its latest national convention. He said in most emphatic terms that it would not do for the organization to simply frown upon the use of dynamite, but that *any member hereafter advocating the use of dynamite must be summarily expelled.* Can Mr. Appleton honestly recommend any newsdealer, or any other man, to join such an organization as that?

Economic Blessings: Taxation.

To be taxed with, carries the idea of having something bad imputed to us; but to pay taxes, whether in produce, in money, or in blood, constitutes the whole duty of man . . considered as the subject of Government, which, as statesmen teach, is the chief object of his existence. This proves how much "more blessed it is to give than to receive," and is a touching accord between religion and political economy. And this serves to explain the efflorescence of philanthropy in taxation, with the original idea of counteracting landlordry by making it difficult for small farmers to occupy the soil. For are they not most apt to be rack renters? On the other hand, there is the Czar, who owns all the Russias; and is he not the Father of his people, the representative of God? What an excellent model for Uncle Sam!

Gathering the reins of empire in his hands, Pluribuster appreciates the principle of counterpoise between taxation and the currency, of which he is the common fountain head, and which are responsive; as in breathing, inhalation with exhalation.

From which composite reciprocity it results that by simply contracting the currency taxes may be virtually doubled or quadrupled without changing a figure, and the dollar which yesterday commanded but a peck may to-morrow command a bushel of the same produce. The difference is still greater between now and the palmy days of greenbacks. The swing of the financial pendulum from fiat paper to gold is the inhalation which swells the chest of Pluribuster with the fortunes of his bond-holders. The laurels that waved on the brow of Miltiades rustled in the dreams of Themistocles. The genius of finance whispers in the ear of the genius of taxation.

The beautiful simplicity with which the millions rise to gild the Olympian heights of speculation, unsullied by the grime of toil, affords fertile suggestions. Here are some thirteen hundred millions of rent flowing into the pockets of landlords; why not into the treasury of that great collective Being, the reservoir of Nature's bounty? But class legislation is invidious, and to strike at a class, — that makes enemies. Let us then take the whole soil at one tributary sweep; that is impartial. And we billionize. This idea was left out of the Georgics of Virgil, but the world gathers moss as it rolls.

In gathering moss, too, it must be considered that small properties naturally are assessed higher in proportion than large ones. Assessors are not insensible to the reverence which magnitude inspires, nor to the benefit of friends in power. To impregnate the ballot with my idea, a hue and cry against landlordry will suffice for them asses, while the landlords themselves and other capitalists do not need to be told that under heavier taxation their coupons and long purses will take the wind out of the sails of the small farmer collapsed, run in debt, and sent adrift.

But as all other production, as well as consumption, must draw its material from the soil, he who can hold on to it will only have to imitate the merchant who adds the revenue tax to the prices of his goods. It is always the consumer who really pays. But there are consumers and consumers. Some devour bread and meat grown upon the soil. Some sip foreign wines and rustle in foreign silks. Having secured the suffrage of the clodhoppers against the landlords, and of the landlords against the clodhoppers, let us set our cap for the free traders. Rich by taxes equivalent to the rental of a continent, why need Uncle Sam bother with custom houses? He can afford to take down fences and abolish toll gates. All the costs of our Government having been comfortably adjusted on the packsaddle of Labor, foreign luxuries may come in free to compensate for the cream of our soil, which goes out to fatten absentee landlords and English cattle kings. Abounding in this sense of liberality, we may also exempt from taxation the little improvements of our own millionaires. This courtesy will attach their capitals to the pillars of government. A noble conception of political architecture!

The majestic simplicity of a continent's "unearned increment" rising in one golden jet from the globe to seek its destined level in Uncle Sam's pocket is a picturesque and statesmanlike idea.

Certain State Socialists felicitate the proletary on the promised exemption from revenue taxes. Their champagne will come cheaper along with other shams, all but the pain, in fact. But the hero of taxation is less in love than Marx with the ideal proletary. He contemplates complacently the equalization of the land tax by diffusion through the prices of produce over all consumers impartially.

This spontaneous permeation of the blessing by economic law gives a lively idea of "the bounty of Nature" and the genius of its author. (I don't mean the author of Nature, though I would not exclude Him from the honor of inspiring so sublime an idea as taxing the land out of landlordry. *A tout seigneur toute honneur*, including the august figure of the tax assessor which looms on our horizon.) Behold the pivot of the ideal State, the mediator between the soil and its spoilers, on whose absorbent and secretive virtue the whole fabric of government depends. With what aweful reverence must the landholder regard the arbiter of his industrial destinies! What conservative influence he must wield for his party, the party in power! What a political game flavor the lordly haunch of venison will have when he dines with the landed proprietor!

But we forbear to roast the goose that lays such golden eggs. *Satis*, George. Adieu. Your true admirer,
EDGEWORTH.

A Friend of Law and Religion.

To the Editor of Liberty:

DEAR SIR,—Specimen Copy of your paper received and *contents carefully read*, and will say I want *no paper* so *slimy* against any class of persons as your article on lawyers, no matter how many good things you may say, nor any paper that leaves *God* and the *teachings* of *Christ out* entirely and Ridicules Religion. H. C. VROOMAN.

TOPEKA, KANSAS, November 17, 1885.

AT VANDERBILT'S BURIAL.

[*Translated from the German.*]

On Staten Island stands a monument,
A mausoleum worthy of a hero,
Adorned with splendor that the Orient
Ne'er saw, still less the ancient Rome of Nero.
About it hangs today a loit'ring crowd,
Despite the threat'ning gale and cold so bitter,
Of curious gapers. There, within his shroud,
To rest a dead man's brought upon his litter.

What greatness did the dead achieve in life?
As statesman did he fame acquire, or honor?
As soldier did he wage a life-long strife
For freedom with the foes who trample on her?
As thinker did he guide, with wisdom's shield,
The minds of men through paths till then untrodden?
As artist did he so his pencil wield
That masters old seemed crude beside the modern?

Oh, no, my friend, it is not as you think:
By statesmanship he did not win his glory;
From fighting he was ever sure to shrink;
The death he met was anything but gory.
Nor yet as artist had he any skill;
He could not tell a painting from a chromo;
The world of thought gave him no place to fill;
His ignorance disgraced the *genus homo*.

I wrong him: he one branch of science knew
And understood: 'twas that of money-getting!
The famous art, known only to the few,
Of luring all the fools into his netting;
Of laughing when he other men displaced;
Of ruling thousands to their ruin going, —
Yes, that he understood; for sons to waste
He left behind two hundred millions growing.

"For others what care I?" he proudly said.
"Be damned the public!" he was wont to thunder.
The rich man now needs nothing but his bed;
To his new home he cannot take his plunder.
Today the public pays him back in kind;
It heaps no coals of fire, but loud rejoices.
The people 'round his monument we find,
But "Vanderbilt be damned!" cry all their voices.

IRELAND!

By GEORGES SAUTON.

Translated from the French for Liberty by Sarah E. Holmes.

Continued from No. 72.

"Wait, I have not finished. His name was James Farcy. After some days I learn that they have carried the two bodies into the chapel and that the families of the friends are watching there in tears, in complaints, and in curses upon the assassins. Good! What do I do? I give orders to the comrades: 'To horse!' and we gallop across the country to Alton, where we set fire to the chapel! A real bonfire!"

"A deed absolutely meritorious and for which you will be recompensed on high, since you destroy the altars of superstition and the asylum where the Revolution is tempered for the struggle; for this death watch was at the same time, do not doubt, an armed watch. In your place, I should even have proceeded to the arrest of the participants in this manifestation."

"And it would have been better to surprise them at the foot of the coffins and to shoot them in a lump!"

"To shoot! always to shoot!"

Sir Archibald scowled disapprovingly.

"What then? Should we have shut the doors and burned them alive?"

The minister, without passing his judgment and without showing the least repugnance in regard to this monstrous proposition, explained himself.

He professed an invincible aversion to all execution in which human blood is shed; this sentiment, instinctive in him and which was a result of the wholly feminine delicacy of his nature, was all the stronger because it was a matter of religious conscientiousness with him. For the eternal torments, he thought that the dead ought to arrive at the tribunal of God in their integrity.

Quite recently, Mr. Cope, the pastor of Carnew, had presided at the execution of twenty-eight heads of families. They made vague charges of conspiracy against them: Gowan had surely heard it spoken of. No?

Among the number figured Pat Murphy of Knakbrandon and William Young, a Protestant, by the way; but many Protestants were already affiliated on the ground of patriotism. In short, Mr. Cope had them ranged in a file and shot till there was no longer an "Oh!" from the mass.

"Perfect!" said Gowan, smacking his tongue as if he were tasting a liquor.

"Oh, well! As for me, I would have hung them," concluded Sir Archibald Owens, "or strangled them, garroted them as in Spain, smothered them under mattresses, crucified them, or burned them, faith, as you said just now, because, in burning, they suffer on this earth the same torments for which they are destined in another world."

After some steps in silence, during which he seemed absorbed by the solution of a difficult problem, he added:

"And my personal judgment leads me to believe that their souls do not disengage themselves completely from the tunic of flames in which they are wrapped at the moment of death, so that" . . . .

But the chief of the "Infernal Mob" was not listening; along the road the amaranthine trunks of young ash trees were swaying, and Gowan remarked that over a long stretch they had lopped off the tops and branches; he indicated them with his finger to his companion, who understood:

"To furnish handles for the pikes!" said he, concisely.

"And the heads of the pikes imply blacksmiths," resumed Gowan. "Beginning with this afternoon, I shall make of these rebellious Vulcans who would bother us too much, a general sweep, including the workman with the work."

"Act most promptly, my friend; unfortunately, I cannot, with my limping leg, keep up with your horse, and it would make your load too heavy to take me on behind: but with a carriage I shall arrive in time to pronounce my sentence". . .

"Or ratify that which I shall have executed. Let me follow my own course."

"Then, do not shoot, I beg you! Respect my weakness and my principles!"

Suddenly Gowan brightened up.

From afar, in the silence of the country, came the vibrating echo, clear and piercing, of an anvil which they were beating.

Snuffing the air like a ravenous beast who scents his prey from afar, the ex-lackey of Newington rose in his stirrups to take his bearings, and scrutinized the gray road.

At the horizon a thick cloud of dust was rolling along with a roar of a breaking wave. It was the soldiers of his company, who, according to their orders, were advancing to meet the captain sent for the night before by Sir Archibald.

"Perfect!" said Gowan.

And, wishing Owens an excellent end of his journey, he applied both spurs, drawing blood from the flanks of his horse, that he might the sooner join his men and lead them, without delay, by a branch road, to smash the bellows of this forge which was working more actively every instant, and then the chest of the blacksmith.

"Do not shoot!" cried out vehemently the gentle and rigorous pastor . . . "I forbid it explicitly, ex-plic-it-ly, you understand?"

At first Gowan, disturbed by this prohibition, replied by muttering a filthy insult; then, mimicing Sir Archibald, he promised to conform, ex-plic-it-ly, ex-plic-it-ly, preferring that course!

An idea occurred to him which would command general approval and do honor to his imagination.

The proverb tells us it is a bad thing to put one's hand between the hammer and the anvil. So Gowan would take care not to put his hands there; but those of the blacksmith, that was quite another thing! Those, on the contrary, should be placed upon the anvil, and whoever liked might forge them for him, with all his might, to try his strength.

They should forge them slowly at first, to warm them; then more quickly, more briskly, to flatten them, and, once warm, to make them throb; then the fingers would separate like so many spear-heads, and they would keep on forging, mangling the joints and crushing the very marrow out of the little bones in the hand!

And imitating the vibrating sound of the steel which they were hammering: "Bing! bing! bing!" the captain of the "Infernal Mob," the noxious Hunter Gowan, accelerated the gait of his beast, in a hurry to gratify himself with this recreation, to hear his victim bellow like an ox at the slaughter-house, and to contemplate his twisted mouth. Comical! exhilarating!

He disappeared very soon in the cloud of dust which enveloped the band and which flew suddenly to the left in a dark whirlwind, and the melancholy magistrate also hastened his steps as much as his feeble resources would admit.

The isolation of the road extending as far as one could see between monotonous meadows weighed upon him like a burden fastened to his back, and, under the cold, dry sky, tormented him, at the same time, with sudden frights.

He pictured to himself Barleitt simply bruised, getting up again, and attempting with great strides to overtake him and avenge himself on him for Gowan's cruelty and his personal failure in his duty as a judge.

And just then a hasty trot sounded behind him, approaching at a good pace, while, at the same time, the snuffing of a broken breath became more and more perceptible, and Sir Archibald said to himself that he should feel its warmth in his neck before long if he did not start upon a run himself.

Surely this was the angry farmer, ready to do anything; in a few minutes, he would stretch out his infinite arms, and, in a trice, my pastor's neck would be twisted, and he would be kicking about and biting the dust.

So, with the courage of fear, he began to hop like a wounded bird, which was his way of running, fretting at having forgotten his bill-headed dogberry cane with which to support himself.

But in vain did he exert himself, in vain did he feebly brace himself up to leap ahead, the trot now sounded as if it were within ten paces of him, and was supplemented by a rattling of iron and a rumbling of wheels.

Heavens! They had picked up Emeric, they had lifted him into a vehicle, and now he would have to face not only his wrath, but that of the people who were carrying him.

Sir Archibald stopped, pierced by an excessive pain in his side, his spleen distended, and inwardly regretting life, sighing, whining, a hideous, comical caricature: he recommended his soul to God; but a big, pleasant voice hailed him:

"Won't you have a seat in my carriage, reverend sir?"

The discomfited magistrate ventured a half turn of his head, gave a timid glance toward the questioner, and discerned, under the hood of the carriage, a large round face, ruddy, open, and bright, which at once inspired confidence.

He was about to accept the polite offer made him, when he perceived at the left of the vehicle the crescent-moon face of Sir Richmond, the parish priest of Bunclody, and he moved his lips to decline the invitation; the priest did not give him time.

"If it is my society which displeases you," said he, unctuously, to Sir Archibald, "I will get down; I am rested."

"You will remain," affirmed the owner of the vehicle,—who made a third occupant, his clerk, give up his seat,—"and if the pastor fears a theological dispute which may degenerate into a quarrel, I will seat myself between you two."

Sir Richmond protested.

No discussion would arise: he would promise on his part; the present hour was not for religious controversy; the political question unfortunately dominated all, and on this point he would much surprise the pastor by assuring him that he did not in the least approve the agitation which was spreading among the masses.

This declaration conquered the hesitation of Sir Archibald, and, William Grobb, the clerk, consenting, with as good grace as he could command, to take a seat in the back of the carriage, on a footstool, he prepared to get up; but first the patron, lifting his cap of knit wool, presented himself:

"Tom Lichfield, of Canterbury, merchant, member of the Philadelphian Society of Glasgow, of the temperance societies of Southampton, Merioneth, Dolgelly," etc., etc.

Sir Archibald saluted him, and then his colleague of the Catholic faith, who, introducing him, told off his titles and functions,—already previously announced by him to Lichfield, when, in the rear, he had recognized the pastor's profile. Clinging to the apron of the carriage and the hand that Tom held out to him, he installed himself on the seat, at the right of the driver, who judged it more prudent, all the same, to separate the two priests.

A precaution absolutely needless, as, barring some slight differences, they immediately fell into accord.

The priest of Bunclody was returning from administering the sacrament to a miserable victim of the civil discords, whose left breast had been almost entirely cut off by one of Gowan's agents, causing a fatal hemorrhage.

"I condemn always those who shed blood!" protested the pastor, quickly and in good faith; and, in exchange for this good word, which in no way pledged its author, the priest confessed that the barbarism had an excuse.

"They rebelled against the troop *à propos* of a harness which they seized; a requisition, however, which was rather abrupt and informal; but soldiers are not diplomats; these especially, of necessity, for one does not form a corps of police and desperadoes from the superior classes! They pushed on, a big devil drawing his sword:

"'Room! Room!' Ah! yes, they crowded still more; the stifled horses neighed, pawed furiously, and reared, with smoking nostrils. A demoniac, a certain Breigh, seized the horse of the big devil in question by the mane, the rider by the hip. The latter drew his sword, but Breigh's wife had seen the action, turned it aside from her husband, and received it herself" . . .

"Then," said Lichfield, "the soldier was not culpable."

"They pretend, indeed," resumed Sir Richmond, "that he let fall some unfortunate comments; he might have said, 'Now, you will nurse no more little rebels!' She carried at her breast a child which was miraculously saved! Really, it would have been wholly censurable if he had used such language. I maintain, in any case, that he had slandered the unfortunate woman; I knew her, she censures the exaltation of mind, the violence which they no longer always restrain."

"And the affiliations with the United Irishmen?" added Sir Archibald.

"Ah! an association!" faltered the priest, simulating surprise.

But the pastor-judge assured him that he made a mystery of facts which were a secret to no one, and the priest of Bunclody, convinced, admitted knowing, in truth, of this association, and combatted it with all his might by word and deed.

"Yes!" said he, "I preach submission, obedience; I reject pitilessly from the confessional whoever has joined in the work of emancipation, of which the only effect, finally, will be to fasten firmly the yoke on their necks; I will hereafter consecrate no union of members of the society, I will refuse baptism to their newly-born and the holy oil and the prayers of the sacred office to their dead."

"Very good! father," applauded the pastor, warmly.

And the priest of the Apostolic Church, Catholic and Roman, desirous of completely winning the approbation of his brother of the English Church, terminated by a profession of faith.

King George might practise a different religion from that of the Irish; he was none the less their sovereign, by the grace of God; and every individual who rebelled against his law revolted against celestial authority itself.

Tom Lichfield acquiesced; but he pleaded extenuating circumstances. Misery, a misery dark, odious, unspeakable, afflicted the population. These gentlemen were in a position, through their priesthood, to see it every day. He, Lichfield, did not suspect it before having set foot on the territory of the sister island, and penetrated, by right of his commission as member of the Philadelphian society, into the huts of these people, these wretches!

Just then, at the side of the road, a dark hut appeared, a ruin, a pile of rubbish, a mass of dirt, looking, in the distance, like a swelling of the ground. Built of branches and of a mortar made of mud and pebbles, it was exposed to all the blasts of the north wind and the showers of rain. The summer sun made crevices in it; the deluge of rain, during the winter, filled its walls, so much that at all sea-

sons those who took shelter there were exposed night and day to the risk of their falling in.

All three—the priest, the pastor, and the merchant—turned aside from this sorrowful picture with a movement of repulsion, their touched hearts rising to their lips.

"And to think," resumed the Englishman, snapping his whip briskly, "that they swarm about in there, some eight or ten of them, lying on the hard ground or in the mud when it has rained, smoked like herrings or pigs with their primitive fireplace (two rough stones laid together), fed, shall we say, on raw or half-cooked vegetables, and of what variety?"

"Usually turnips which they do not even pare, in order to lose nothing," said the priest, between two lines of his breviary, which he had begun to read with contrition. "They set the kettle on a bench, and each dips into the dish."

"Sometimes there are potatoes, but never bread except at Easter," added the pastor, who was devouring ginger lozenges to facilitate the work of his laborious digestion. "I have visited," continued he, "those who ate grass like the cattle, and on the sea-shore others who, not having strength enough to fish, ate sea-weeds thrown up by the tide."

"And the years of famine," said Lichfield, "neither potatoes, nor turnips, nor anything; the choice between unclean beasts, balls of clay to chew, or tough and spoiled meat,—that of relatives and friends succumbed to hunger."

"Horror!" exclaimed simultaneously the two priests, but faintly, in a minor voice, with the drawling, nasal tone in which they were accustomed to read their services, with no real emotion, in their certainty of never seeing themselves reduced to this extremity.

"So," resumed Lichfield with conviction, "let a demagogue summon them to rebellion, promising them a table set every day, with abundance of roast beef, fish, tarts, and each meal washed down with beer, wines, and liquors in plenty, and, with their hearts in their stomachs and rage in their teeth, they will rush upon society like hordes of barbarians, packs of ferocious hounds."

To be continued.

A LETTER TO GROVER CLEVELAND.

ON

His False, Absurd, Self-Contradictory, and Ridiculous Inaugural Address.

By LYSANDER SPOONER.

[The author reserves his copyright in this letter.]

SECTION XVII.

Although, as has already been said, the constitution is a paper that nobody ever signed, that few persons have ever read, and that the great body of the people never saw; and that has, consequently, no more claim to be the supreme law of the land, or to have any authority whatever, than has any other paper, that nobody ever signed, that few persons ever read, and that the great body of the people never saw; and although it purports to authorize a government, in which the lawmakers, judges, and executive officers are all to be secured against any responsibility whatever *to the people*, whose liberty and rights are at stake; and although this government is kept in operation only by votes given in secret (by secret ballot), and in a way to save the voters from all personal responsibility for the acts of their agents,—the lawmakers, judges, etc.; and although the whole affair is so audacious a fraud and usurpation, that no people could be expected to agree to it, or ought to submit to it, for a moment; yet, inasmuch as the constitution declares itself to have been ordained and established by the people of the United States, for the maintenance of liberty and justice for themselves and their posterity; and inasmuch as all its supporters—that is, the voters, lawmakers, judges, etc.—profess to derive all their authority from it; and inasmuch as all lawmakers, and all judicial and executive officers, both national and State, swear to support it; and inasmuch as they claim the right to kill, and are evidently determined to kill, and esteem it the highest glory to kill, all who do not submit to its authority; we might reasonably expect that, from motives of common decency, if from no other, those who profess to administer it, would pay some deference to its commands, *at least in those particular cases where it explicitly forbids any violation of the natural rights of the people.*

Especially might we expect that the judiciary—whose courts claim to be courts of justice—and who profess to be authorized and sworn to expose and condemn all such violations of individual rights as the constitution itself expressly forbids—would, in spite of all their official dependence on, and responsibility to, the lawmakers, have sufficient respect for their personal characters, and the opinions of the world, to induce them to pay some regard to all those parts of the constitution that expressly require any rights of the people to be held inviolable.

If the judicial tribunals cannot be expected to do justice, even in those cases where the constitution expressly commands them to do it, and where they have solemnly sworn to do it, it is plain that they have sunk to the lowest depths of servility and corruption, and can be expected to do nothing but serve the purposes of robbers and tyrants.

But how futile have been all expectations of justice from the judiciary, may be seen in the conduct of the courts—and especially in that of the so-called Supreme Court of the United States—in regard to men's natural right to make their own contracts.

Although the State lawmakers have, more frequently than the national lawmakers, made laws in violation of men's natural right to make their own contracts, yet all laws, State and national, having for their object the destruction of that right, have always, without a single exception, I think, received the sanction of the Supreme Court of the United States. And having been sanctioned by that court, they have been, as a matter of course, sanctioned by all the other courts, State and national. And this work has gone on, until, if these courts are to be believed, nothing at all is left of men's natural right to make their own contracts.

That such is the truth, I now propose to prove.

And, first, as to the State governments.

The constitution of the United States (*Art.* 1, *Sec.* 10) declares that:

No State shall pass any law impairing the obligation of contracts.

This provision does not designate what contracts have, and what have not, an "obligation." But it clearly presupposes, implies, assumes, and asserts that there *are* contracts that *have* an "obligation." Any State law, therefore, which declares that such contracts shall have *no obligation*, is plainly in conflict with this provision of the constitution of the United States.

This provision, also, by implying that there *are* contracts, that *have* an "obligation," *necessarily implies that men have a right to enter into them;* for if men had no right to enter into the contracts, the contracts themselves could have no "obligation."

This provision, then, of the constitution of the United States, not only implies that there are contracts that *have* an obligation, *but it also implies that the people have the right to enter into all such contracts, and have the benefit of them.* And "*any*" State "*law*," conflicting with either of these implications, is necessarily unconstitutional and void.

Furthermore, the language of this provision of the constitution, to wit, "the obligation [singular] of contracts" [plural], implies *that there is one and the same "obligation" to all "contracts" whatsoever, that have any legal obligation at all.* And there obviously must be some one principle, that gives validity to all contracts alike, that have any validity.

The law, then, of this whole country, as established by the constitution of the United States, is, that all contracts whatsoever, in which this one principle of validity, or "obligation," is found, shall be held valid; and that the States shall impose no restraint whatever upon the people's entering into all such contracts.

All, therefore, that courts have to do, in order to determine whether any particular contract, or class of contracts, are valid, *and whether the people have a right to enter into them,* is simply to determine whether the contracts themselves have, or have not, this one principle of validity, or "obligation," which the constitution of the United States declares shall not be impaired.

State legislation can obviously have nothing to do with the solution of this question. It can neither create, nor destroy, that "obligation of contracts," which the constitution forbids it to impair. It can neither give, nor take away, the right to enter into any contract whatever, that has that "obligation."

On the supposition, then, that the constitution of the United States is, what it declares itself to be, *viz.*, "the supreme law of the land, ... anything in the constitutions or laws of the States to the contrary notwithstanding," this provision against "any" State "law impairing the obligation of contracts," is so explicit, and so authoritative, that the legislatures and courts of the States have no color of authority for violating it. And the Supreme Court of the United States has had no color of authority or justification for suffering it to be violated.

This provision is certainly one of the most important—perhaps *the* most important—of all the provisions of the constitution of the United States, *as protective of the natural rights of the people to make their own contracts, or provide for their own welfare.*

Yet it has been constantly trampled under foot, by the State legislatures, by all manner of laws, declaring who may, and who may not, make certain contracts; and what shall, and what shall not, be "the obligation" of particular contracts; thus setting at defiance all ideas of justice, of natural rights, and equal rights; conferring monopolies and privileges upon particular individuals, and imposing the most arbitrary and destructive restraints and penalties upon others; all with a view of putting, as far as possible, all wealth into the hands of the few, and imposing poverty and servitude upon the great body of the people.

And yet all these enormities have gone on for nearly a hundred years, and have been sanctioned, not only by all the State courts, but also by the Supreme Court of the United States.

And what color of excuse have any of these courts offered for thus upholding all these violations of justice, of men's natural rights, and even of that constitution which they had all sworn to support?

They have offered only this: *They have all said they did not know what "the obligation of contracts" was!*

Well, suppose, for the sake of the argument, that they have not known what "the obligation of contracts" was, what, then, was their duty? Plainly this, to neither enforce, nor annul, any contract whatever, until they should have discovered what "the obligation of contracts" was.

Clearly they could have no right to either enforce, or annul, any contract whatever, until they should have ascertained whether it had any "obligation," and, if any, what that "obligation" was.

If these courts really do not know—as perhaps they do not—what "the obligation of contracts" is, they deserve nothing but contempt for their ignorance. If they *do* know what "the obligation of contracts" is, and yet sanction the almost literally innumerable laws that violate it, they deserve nothing but detestation for their villainy.

And until they shall suspend all their judgments for either enforcing, or annulling, contracts, or, on the other hand, shall ascertain what "the obligation of contracts" is, and sweep away all State laws that impair it, they will deserve both contempt for their ignorance, and detestation for their crimes.

Individual Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States have, at least in one instance, in 1827 (*Ogden vs. Saunders*, 12 Wheaton 213), attempted to give a definition of "the obligation of contracts." But there was great disagreement among them; and no one definition secured the assent of the whole court, *or even of a majority.* Since then, so far as I know, that court has never attempted to give a definition. And, so far as the opinion of that court is concerned, the question is as unsettled now, as it was sixty years ago. And the opinions of the Supreme Courts of the States are equally unsettled with those of the Supreme Court of the United States. The consequence is, that "the obligation of contracts"—the principle on which the real validity, or invalidity, of all contracts whatsoever depends—is practically unknown, or at least unrecognized, by a single court, either of the States, or of the United States. And, as a result, every species of absurd, corrupt, and robber legislation goes on unrestrained, as it always has done.

What, now, is the reason why not one of these courts has ever so far given its attention to the subject as to have discovered what "the obligation of contracts" is? What that principle is, I repeat, which they have all sworn to sustain, and on which the real validity, or invalidity, of every contract on which they ever adjudicate, depends? Why is it that they have all gone on sanctioning and enforcing all the nakedly iniquitous laws, by which men's natural right to make their own contracts has been trampled under foot?

Surely it is not because they do not know that all men have a natural right to make their own contracts; for they know *that*, as well as they know that all men have a natural right to live, to breathe, to move, to speak, to hear, to see, or to do anything whatever for the support of their lives, or the promotion of their happiness.

Why, then, is it, that they strike down this right, without ceremony, and without compunction, whenever they are commanded to do so by the lawmakers? It is because, and solely because, they are so servile, slavish, degraded, and corrupt, as to act habitually on the principle, that justice and men's natural rights are matters of no importance, in comparison with the commands of the impudent and tyrannical lawmakers, on whom they are dependent for their offices and their salaries. It is because, and solely because, they, like the judges under all other irresponsible and tyrannical governments, are part and parcel of a conspiracy for robbing and enslaving the great body of the people, to gratify the luxury and pride of a few. It is because, and solely because, they do not recognize our gov-

Continued on page 6.

Liberty.

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"A free man is one who enjoys the use of his reason and his faculties; who is neither blinded by passion, nor hindered or driven by oppression, nor deceived by erroneous opinions."—PROUDHON.

Anarchy Necessarily Atheistic.

To the Editor of Liberty:

If Anarchy, as you advocate it, is the abolition of all law and authority except the laws of self-government and self-restraint, and you believe that with these laws of self no man would injure his neighbor, how would such a condition of things, realizing the highest ideals of Socialism and negating all authority, differ from a society governed by the laws, *"thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself,"* and affirming the authority of Christ? (1) If there is no real difference, what use in any negation?

But again: If Anarchy, as you advocate it, be the very highest ideal of Socialism, do you think it possible to make so great a transition as from the present condition of things to that ideal state, except by steps accomplished with more or less celerity? (2)

If not, why can not all men who desire to change the present condition of things for a better one form parts of one great army, and advance as rapidly as possible towards the end. If part of the army halt when certain changes are effected, you are advanced with it so far, and part of your work is accomplished any way, and you have less to do. (3)

The practical question is: what shall we attack first with that amount and kind of force necessary to effect our purposes? The present system must be destroyed in detail, and a new one be supplied in detail. The job is too large to accomplish suddenly and at once. Yours respectfully,

O. P. LEWIS.

527 MAIN STREET, BRIDGEPORT, CONN., December 3, 1885.

(1) A society negating all authority would differ from a society affirming the authority of Christ very much as white differs from black. Self-government is incompatible with government by the law, "thou shalt love the Lord thy God," for the reason that this law implies the existence of God, and God and Man are enemies. God, to be God, must be a governing power. His government cannot be administered directly by the individual, for the individual, and through the individual: if it could, it would at once obliterate individuality altogether. Hence the government of God, if administered at all, must be administered through his professed vicegerents on earth, the dignitaries of Church and State. How this hierarchy differs from Anarchy it is needless to point out.

(2) No.

(3) Because the great majority of the men whose hearts are filled with the "desire to change the present condition of things for a better one" are afflicted with an obscurity of mental vision which renders them incapable of distinguishing between advance and retrogression. Professing an aspiration for entire individual freedom, they aim to effect it by enlarging the sphere of government and restricting and restraining the individual through all sorts of new oppressions. No clear-sighted Anarchist can march with such an army. The farther he should go with it, the farther would he be from his goal, and, instead of having "less to do," he would have more to do, and more to undo. Whenever Liberty hears of any demand for a real increase of freedom, it is prompt to encourage and sustain it, no matter what its source. It marches with any wing of the army of freedom as far as that wing will go. But it sternly refuses to right about face. Liberty hates Catholicism and loves Free Thought; but, when it finds Catholicism advocating and Free Thought opposing the principle of voluntaryism in education, it sustains Catholicism against Free Thought. Likewise, when it finds Liberals and Socialists of all varieties favoring eight-hour laws, government monopoly of money, land nationalization, protection, prohibition, race proscription, State administration of railways, telegraphs, mines, and factories, woman suffrage, man suffrage, common schools, marriage laws, and compulsory taxation, it brands them one and all as false to the principle of freedom, refuses to follow them in their retrogressive course, and keeps its own eyes and steps carefully towards the front. It knows that the only way to achieve freedom is to begin to take it. It is an important question, as Mr. Lewis says, what we shall attack first. On this point Liberty has its opinion also. It believes that the first point of attack should be the power of legally privileged capital to increase without work. And as the monopoly of the issue of money is the chief bulwark of this power, it turns its heaviest guns upon that. But it is impossible to successfully attack the money monopoly or any other monopoly or privilege, unless the general principle of freedom be first established. That is the reason why Liberty makes this principle its own guide and its test of the course of others.

T.

Afflicted with Blind-Staggers.

The editor of the "Truth Seeker" is a great bouncing good fellow. He snuffs the air as though it belonged to him. There is not a mean spot in him, and he would spurn to descend to such dishonest tricks as a certain old fox in the free-thought line in Boston is capable of. Neither does he pretend to "culture," and puts on none of those dainty, mincing airs which certain Free Religious sepulchral high priests masquerade in, as forms hardly risen from the dead. For ordinary purposes he is a good, square, level-headed fellow, and publishes the best free-thought journal in America.

But he is, alas! no philosopher. Give him a good rounded philosophical statement, and he will prance around it like a monkey, chattering such disconnected and inchoate things that it is very hard to get a grip on him. Yet, if he is honest, he is worth saving; hence from time to time I have tried to show him how utterly illogical he is in fighting the Church while at the same time defending the State, when the two are simply different arms of one identical body.

In attempting to criticise my late article, "Institution-Ridden," he steps into a clam-hole and gets over his head. Then how he does flounder and splash! After calling my analysis of true social law a mere "bundle of assertions," he says that Anarchy is unfitted for anything short of the millennium, and makes Mr. Tucker say that it is "impossible of realization."

Mr. Macdonald does admit, then, that at the millennium, which occurs about a thousand years from now, Anarchy will be in order. This is certainly no mean compliment to Anarchy. If Anarchism were radically wrong, it could not live so long and capture the world just in proportion as progress moves. What progress have the old left-handed guns such as are still wielded in the "Truth Seeker" office made in the last four thousand years? Priests were never so numerous and so fat as they are today. And yet in one thousand years Anarchy is to take the field and priestcraft be no more. Friend Macdonald, you had better get on board our train, considering the slow progress of your old team through several millenniums.

When the editor of the "Truth Seeker" asserts that full voluntary individual coöperation would be an institution as fully as any, I pass such ignorance gently by with a recommendation to consult Webster's unabridged, if nothing better is at hand.

Our friend asserts that "the best of governments is a necessary evil, yet that it *is* necessary no man in his senses can deny." But why is this true of civil governments and not of theological? The vital point, which will not go into Friend Macdonald's brain, is that civil government and theological are one and the same thing. Upon this plain proposition the whole inconsistency of his position hinges. Both rest upon authority. Both are defended as conservators of good order. Each invokes the other when violence is threatened. Each advertises itself as a restraining force. Both assume to be instituted of God. Both levy compulsory taxes. Both have pains and penalties for disobedience. Neither concedes the right of private judgment, when expressed in acts. Both are monopolies of natural wealth and the means of well-being. There is, in short, not a single principle that applies to one that does not exactly fit the other. Why, in all consistency, then, condemn the one and defend the other? Why a theological Anarchist and a civil politician? Why skepticism here and cringing faith there? This is the one point that I cannot hold these free-thought people to. They dodge and splatter and hide everywhere. Macdonald in his silly and incoherent reply to me talks exactly like the editor of "Zion's Herald" when replying to him.

Editor Macdonald's greatest fear of Anarchy lies in his dread of thieves. What is a thief? Is it not he who takes your property without your consent? What power is chiefly engaged in this business? He knows it is the so-called government. Yet he sticks to it that the public welfare calls for these governmental thieves. In saying that the government is the people, he says that the people are thieves. What people? Does he mean everybody? Still more does he insult the people by saying that, if they do not want to be robbed, they can modify the thieving institution. Have the people, then, been engaged in setting up an institution to rob themselves?

According to Mr. Macdonald it is the "public welfare" that demands a government. Who is this individual, Public Welfare, and who gave him the right to demand anything? Individuals just as good and wise as Editor Macdonald declare that Public Welfare demands that we *should not* have a government. Public Welfare, then, seems to be talking both ways at once. He is on both sides of the fence. He demands of Macdonald that we have a government, and he demands of me that we *have not* a government. He seems to be about as irresponsible and uncertain a nonentity as that other incomprehensible thing, "the people." Cannot Editor Macdonald give us some accurate description of these two great potentates of his? Are their pictures to be found in any thieves' gallery, or their biographies in any known library?

Editor Macdonald's libel on Nature is about the blankest piece of pessimistic savagery that I have seen for many a day. He says that Nature is as vicious as God, which is equivalent to saying that the existing Christian God is as good an ideal as Nature is capable of producing. Hence he charges upon Nature all the crimes and cruelties executed by the God of the Spanish Inquisition. Could I believe that Friend Macdonald had sunken so hopelessly low as this, I should despair of him. The fact is that, when he gets tangled up in his own inconsistencies on this subject of Anarchism, he becomes mad. If there is no more virtue in natural law than in the God of scripture, where, then, are we to look for help? Nothing is left us, I fancy, but Macdonald's brain. It were indeed a hard outlook.

Try again, Brother Macdonald. I repeat that you are worth saving. The fact that you lose your head on this one subject of Anarchy alone shows that your conscience is ill at ease in your ridiculous position. There is no use of monkeying with this subject of individual liberty. You want to make liberty a sectarian thing. You cannot do it. Your arguments for full individual liberty on the theological side are pure Anarchism, and yet you say that Anarchism is nonsense when another takes them out of your mouth and applies them to civil affairs. In setting up this war with yourself and chasing your own tail, you get dizzy and lose your head. I do not know where it will end, but shall still labor and pray for your soul's conversion.

X.

A Truth Seeker! Pah!

If "X," before writing the foregoing editorial, had seen the "Truth Seeker" of January 2, he would not have done Editor Macdonald so much honor. Not seeing it, he has given him a certificate of character far beyond his deserts. The paper of the date mentioned contained the following:

AN ANSWER AT LAST.

From Liberty.

The New York "Truth Seeker" makes an effort to answer "X's" editorial, "Institution-Ridden." Doubtless "X" will give this effort due and satisfactory attention hereafter. Meantime I may remark the "Truth Seeker's" statement

that when the Anarchist proposes to imprison a thief without his consent, he proposes to set up an institution as really a government as any we now have. Now, it seems to me that just the opposite is the truth, and that the Anarchist in proposing to imprison the thief without his consent, is fighting precisely on the line of no-government. Why? Because in the case supposed the thief is the government.

Mr. Tucker is developing remarkable powers as a humorist. He cannot mean this as a serious argument. It must be a joke.

Readers of Liberty will remember that the passage quoted by the "Truth Seeker" was the beginning of a paragraph the remainder of which was devoted to explaining the seemingly paradoxical statement that "the thief is the government," showing that he is such because he embodies the governing principle, invasion, and that those who resist him, either individually or in association, do not embody that principle at all, but the opposite one, self-defence. Of course, persons unfamiliar with Anarchistic thought, seeing the unexplained statement that the thief is a government, would set its author down for a fool, whereas, if they should see the explanation, they would recognize the idea as an intelligible one, whether it commanded their approval or not. This Macdonald knew; so, seeing a chance to play the pettifogger, he improved it. He did not want his readers to understand me, but snatched at the opportunity of causing them to misunderstand me, in order to avoid confessing his own error,—not being sufficiently ardent in his search for truth to pursue the latter course. Hence he descended to this despicable trick, such as "X," in the kindness of his heart, supposes him to be incapable of. The "Truth Seeker" begins the new year with new type. It needed a change of dress badly, but it needs a change of heart more. T.

The Senator and the Editor.

I.

SENATOR.

"One Little Squeak in One Corner."

The "esteemed Herald" sees in Senator Edmunds the "insight of a philosopher and the foresight of a statesman." We have known that the "Herald's" editor has for some time harbored a kindly appreciation of the Vermont senator in consequence, as we have believed, of his anti-Blaine, mugwumpian proclivities. We are glad now to note that the senator and the editor are travelling apace in a really important direction. The issues in the Blaine campaign were comparatively trivial. The protest of the mugwumps was well enough in itself, but it went not very far, and in no wise justified the claim of the 'wumps themselves that they were engaged in a "great reform." They were orating simply over a little detail of business that the barest common sense would settle easily enough when weightier matters of law, of righteousness, and judgment to come, were well canvassed and disposed of.

But, all things in their season.

The time for figs was not yet. But we are glad to see that nobody's cursing hath withered away what then seemed to mortal vision only a barren tree. Tiniest buds are now shooting forth from half alive twigs. We are rebuked and encouraged.

Without further ado let us announce that Senator Edmunds made a speech at the Merchants' Dinner the other evening that touched on "the conditions and jealousies and disorders that are disturbing society in almost every part of the civilized world."

Now we had read this speech before seeing our editorial friend's comments upon it. But the thing that more particularly impressed itself upon our thought was the peculiarly hilarious tone of it,—of, in fact, nearly all the speeches made by the distinguished gentlemen whom our Boston merchants had summoned from afar for their especial edification and instruction. The Vermont senator exhibited himself, to our eyes, certainly, in a new light. All that grave, sombre, heavy, intellectual cast of mind we had always associated with his name disappeared. The types, at any rate, caused the solemn senator to assume almost the character of the funny man. And yet there were, as we then noted, occasional relapses when sentences and periods took on the old dignity and seriousness. And knowing, too, that after-dinner speeches are *apt* to be jolly, we thought no more about it.

But now the "Sunday Herald" comes to hand to remind us of probably the one notable utterance of the evening. Senator Edmunds, "speaking still to the manufacturers and capitalists before him, said, with much seriousness: 'I wish to tell you that it is well worth your time to begin to study more closely how much we all owe it to that long future which is coming to secure a more careful adjustment of the relations between ourselves and those who furnish the muscle and toil that give vigor and success to our enterprises.'"

In the same serious strain the senator went on to say: "Nihilism, Communism, and every other kind of ism, wild and violent and wicked as much of it is, grow out of a fundamental sentiment, and instinctive and intrinsic discontent, showing that something is wrong at the bottom." Again, to give emphasis: "There is no general discontent in a considerable body of any part of society that does not have some small basis of truth and justice to start upon."

The editor remarks that, in saying this, the senator "left out of the question the small percentage of agitators who are knaves or lunatics."

One more quotation from the Vermont senator's speech, and our readers will have the case fairly before them. He said also: "If you men who have a hundred thousand spindles buzzing in your factory hear one little squeak in one corner, you know that the machinery is out of order; and if you let it go on, and if that unpleasant noise happens to be near the engine, you will probably have an explosion."

Thus we have stated the substance of the senator's "insight" and "foresight."

And we have the editor's comment to the effect that these qualities constitute statesmanship in contrast with the characteristics of the "average politician." "The average politician in office thinks of men only as voters, and directs his plans to carrying the election. The statesman, who answers to the definition of a 'philosopher in action,' thinks of them as human beings with needs and wants and aspirations, and shapes his course to secure for them the best and happiest conditions of living."

It is in this direction that the thoughts of Senator Edmunds are turning, and with particular reference to the "relation between capital and labor."

As a matter of common news the senator is informed of the existence of "Nihilism, Communism, and eve other species of ism."

Othe n—the average politician—allow such news free passage through one ear and out of another.

The "philosopher in action"—the statesman—arrests such news as it enters his mind, and ponders over it.

His *insight* tells him that something is wrong: "There is no general discontent that does not have some small basis of justice and truth to start upon." He knows that the machinery of society is out of order.

Then, his foresight assures him that, "if the unpleasant noise is allowed to go on, the end will probably be an explosion."

Hence, it is wisdom, at least,—it is also just and human,—to pay attention to the matter before it is too late.

For, as certainly as two and two are four, "the little squeak in one corner"—if allowed to go on—means—if too near the engine—explosion!

The statesman—eternally vigilant—will permit no such catastrophe.

He will study the social machine.

He will discover the cause of the "little squeak."

He will proclaim the cause of the "general discontent" and the remedy.

He will arouse the country.

He will *stop* the "little squeak."

The senator from Vermont has not gone quite so far as this.

He concedes that "something is wrong at the bottom"; and he urges "manufacturers and capitalists" to study more closely "to secure a more careful adjustment," etc.

But what that "careful adjustment" is, or should be, he has, so far as we are aware, refrained as yet from stating.

The editor has evidently noticed this. He has, therefore, proceeded, in a manner all his own, to clear up this later and by no means least important factor in the business in hand,—concerning which we shall have somewhat to say at another time.

Giving attention, on this occasion, principally to the senator, we are left to discover his probable opinions as to the method by which the "little squeak" is to be stopped, from the tenor of his remarks announcing it.

He was addressing merchants, manufacturers, capitalists. He says in substance: "Gentlemen, we [you] who employ those who furnish the muscle and toil that give vigor and success to our enterprises are not quite secure in our position. In fact, there is a great agitation against us. Of course much of it, most of it, is wild and violent and wicked. But still it must have at least a *small* basis of truth and justice to stand upon; else it could not exist. The discontent would not be so general. Now, we must *look* to it. This discontent must be allayed. Labor must be conciliated, or capital will go up in an explosion."

Thus, by iteration and reiteration, we have sought to impress upon the reader's mind the pith and scope of the statesmanlike utterances of the senator from Vermont.

If the reader still is left considerably in the fog, so are we.

Perhaps in our next, when we come to deal with the editorial utterances of the editor, we shall see some of this fog clearing itself away, and permitting a ray of light.

We do not forget that the senator says the discontent of labor is based on a "fundamental sentiment"; that it is "instinctive and intrinsic."

But, then—? H.

Random Comment.

To the Ed tor of Liberty:

Your correspondent, Gertrude B. Kelly, probes the social dry rot to the bottom when she says: "Both the drawing of dividends and the drawing of wood, coal, and provisions signifying the taking something and giving nothing in return."

Interest and dividends, rent and profits, by which the capitalist who neither toils or spins exploits labor, are never thought of as unjust by "Culture," "Charity," and "Sympathy"! If entire justice were observed in all the dealings of man with man, poverty would be associated only with idleness; for a justice-loving society would voluntarily insure all its members against misfortune or unavoidable loss by accident or forces of nature.

This is how I would abolish *forced* poverty, by which I mean unnatural poverty.

I wish to express my pleasure with the elucidation of the tariff question by Lysander Spooner in his "Letter to Grover Cleveland." It is refreshing to find such pure reasoning after reading such rot as the "Irish World" fills its columns with. To what desperate straits Protectionists are reduced when they are driven by sheer necessity to load their cause with such drivel and puerilities as that betrayer of labor weekly inflicts on its readers.

I am glad to identify and to find myself again in companionship with "Honorius" and "Phillip." I extend greetings. But where is "Elias Lee" of Kansas?

By the way, why is the term "Free Love" so persistently misunderstood? Is it because of its associations: or maltreatment by those believing it? To me it is the absolute equality of the sexes in marriage! Am I right?

Why does the "Galveston News" fall into such inexcusable confusion in speaking of "money" as to make the terms "money" and "metal" interchangeable? And why does the editor not see the wisdom—nay, the necessity—for abolishing all laws for the collection of debts, as *no money can be made* which will always purchase the same amount of products from year to year. E. H. Benton.

Geer, Nebraska.

FREEDOM.

In mental freedom I revel at will,
No voice my expression of thought can still.
Political freedom inheritance gives;
O'er actions, like thoughts, no master lives.
Industrial freedom—alas! I crave
The *right* to toil with the mien of a slave.

A right I have to command my thought,
A right that conflict and blood have bought.
The right to command my thought in deed
Our fathers' blood made liberty's creed.
The right to command the means of life
Is the standard of progress,—welcome the strife!

D. D. L.

A LETTER TO GROVER CLEVELAND.

Continued from page 3.

ernments, State or national, as institutions designed simply to maintain justice, or to protect all men in the enjoyment of all their natural rights; but only as institutions designed to accomplish such objects as irresponsible cabals of lawmakers may agree upon.

In proof of all this, I give the following.

Previous to 1824, two cases had come up from the State courts, to the Supreme Court of the United States, involving the question whether a State law, *invalidating some particular contract*, came within the constitutional prohibition of "any law impairing the obligation of contracts."

One of these cases was that of *Fletcher vs. Peck*, (6 *Cranch* 87), in the year 1810. In this case the court held simply that a grant of land, once made by the legislature of Georgia, could not be rescinded by a subsequent legislature.

But no general definition of "the obligation of contracts" was given.

Again, in the year 1819, in the case of *Dartmouth College vs. Woodward* (4 *Wheaton* 518), the court held that a charter, granted to Dartmouth College, by the king of England, before the Revolution, was a contract; and that a law of New Hampshire, annulling, or materially altering, the charter, without the consent of the trustees, was a "law impairing the obligation" of *that* contract.

But, in this case, as in that of *Fletcher vs. Peck*, the court gave no general definition of "the obligation of contracts."

But in the year 1824, and again in 1827, in the case of *Ogden vs. Saunders* (12 *Wheaton* 213) the question was, whether an insolvent law of the State of New York, which discharged a debtor from a debt, *contracted after the passage of the law*, or, as the courts would say, "*contracted under the law*"—on his giving up his property to be distributed among his creditors—was a "law impairing the obligation of contracts?"

To the correct decision of this case, it seemed indispensable that the court should give a comprehensive, precise, and *universal* definition of "the obligation of contracts"; one by which it might forever after be known what was, and what was not, that "obligation of contracts," which the State governments were forbidden to "impair" by "*any law*" whatever.

The cause was heard at two terms, that of 1824, and that of 1827.

It was argued by Webster, Wheaton, Wirt, Clay, Livingston, Ogden, Jones, Sampson, and Haines; nine in all. Their arguments were so voluminous that they could not be reported at length. Only summaries of them are given. But these summaries occupy thirty-eight pages in the reports.

The judges, at that time, were seven, *viz.*, Marshall, Washington, Johnson, Duvall, Story, Thompson, and Trimble.

The judges gave five different opinions; occupying one hundred pages of the reports.

But no one definition of "the obligation of contracts" could be agreed on; *not even by a majority.*

Here, then, sixteen lawyers and judges—many of them among the most eminent the country has ever had—were called upon to give their opinions upon a question of the highest importance to all men's natural rights, to all the interests of civilized society, and to the very existence of civilization itself; a question, upon the answer to which depended the real validity, or invalidity, of every contract that ever was made, or ever will be made, between man and man. And yet, by their disagreements, they all virtually acknowledged that they did not know what "the obligation of contracts" was!

But this was not all. Although they could not agree as to what "the obligation of contracts" was, they did all agree that it could be nothing which the State lawmakers could not prohibit and abolish, *by laws passed before the contracts were made.* That is to say, they all agreed that the State lawmakers had absolute power to prohibit all contracts whatsoever, for buying and selling, borrowing and lending, giving and receiving, property; and that, whenever they did prohibit any particular contract, or class of contracts, *all such contracts, thereafter made, could have no "obligation"!*

They said this, be it noted, not of contracts that were naturally and intrinsically criminal and void, but of contracts that were naturally and intrinsically as just, and lawful, and useful, and necessary, as any that men ever enter into; and that had as perfect a natural, intrinsic, inherent "obligation," as any of those contracts, by which the traffic of society is carried on, or by which men ever buy and sell, borrow and lend, give and receive, property, of and to each other.

Not one of these sixteen lawyers and judges took the ground that the constitution, in forbidding any State to "pass a law impairing the obligation of contracts," intended to protect, against the arbitrary legislation of the States, the only true, real, and natural "obligation of contracts," or the right of the people to enter into all really just, and naturally obligatory contracts.

Is it possible to conceive of a more shameful exhibition, or confession, of the servility, the baseness, or the utter degradation, of both bar and bench, than their refusal to say one word in favor of justice, liberty, men's natural rights, or the natural, and only real, "obligation" of their contracts?

And yet, from that day to this—a period of sixty years, save one—neither bar nor bench, so far as I know, have ever uttered one syllable in vindication of men's natural right to make their own contracts, or to have the only true, real, natural, inherent, intrinsic "obligation" of their contracts respected by lawmakers or courts.

Can any further proof be needed that all ideas of justice and men's natural rights are absolutely banished from the minds of lawmakers, and from so-called courts of justice? or that absolute and irresponsible lawmaking has usurped their place?

Or can any further proof be needed, of the utter worthlessness of all the constitutions, which these lawmakers and judges swear to support, and profess to be governed by?

WHAT'S TO BE DONE?

A ROMANCE.

By N. G. TCHERNYCHEWSKY.

Translated by Benj. R. Tucker.

Continued from No. 72.

Kirsanoff talked a long time in this tone. And at last the patient told him the name of the man she loved, and gave him permission to speak to her father. Polosoff was greatly astonished to learn that the cause of his daughter's exhaustion was a desperate passion; he was still more astonished when he heard the name of the man whom she loved, and said firmly: "Let her die rather. Her death would be the lesser misfortune for her as well as for me."

The case was the more difficult from the fact that Kirsanoff, after hearing Polosoff's reasons, saw that the old man was right and not his daughter.

IV.

Suitors by hundreds paid court to the heiress of an immense fortune; but the society which thronged at Polosoff's dinners and parties was of that very doubtful sort and tone which ordinarily fills the parlors of the suddenly rich like Polosoff, who have neither relatives nor connections in the real aristocracy. Consequently these people ordinarily become the hosts of sharpers and coxcombs as destitute of external polish as of internal virtues. That is why Katérina Vassilievna was very much impressed when among her admirers appeared a real gallant of the best tone: his deportment was much more elegant, and his conversation much wiser and more interesting, than those of any of the others.

The father was quick to notice that she showed a preference for him, and, being a positive, resolute, and firm man, he instantly had an explanation with his daughter: "Dear Katia, Solovtzoff is paying you assiduous attention; look out for him; he is a very bad man, utterly heartless; you would be so unhappy with him that I would rather see you dead than married to him; it would not be so painful either for me or for you."

Katérina Vassilievna loved her father and was accustomed to heed his advice, for he never laid any restraint upon her, and she knew that he spoke solely from love of her; and, further, it was her nature to try rather to please those who loved her than to satisfy her own caprices; she was of those who love to say to their relatives: "You wish it; I will do it." She answered her father: "Solovtzoff pleases me, but, if you think it better that I should avoid his society, I will follow your advice." Certainly she would not have acted in this way, and, in conformity with her nature,—not to lie,—she would not have spoken in this way, if she had loved him; but at that time she had but a very slight attachment for Solovtzoff, almost none at all: he simply seemed to her a little more interesting than the others. She became cold towards him, and perhaps everything would have passed off quietly, had not her father in his ardor gone a little too far, just enough for the cunning Solovtzoff. He saw that he must play the *rôle* of a victim, but where should he find a pretext? One day Polosoff happened to indulge in a bitter jest at his expense. Solovtzoff, with an air of wounded dignity, took his leave and ceased his visits. A week later Katérina Vassilievna received from him a passionate, but extremely humble, letter. He had not hoped that she would love him; the happiness of sometimes seeing her, though even without speaking to her, had been enough for him. And yet he sacrificed this happiness to the peace of his divinity. After all, he was happy in loving her even hopelessly, and so on; but no prayers or desires. He did not even ask for a reply. Other letters of the same style arrived from time to time, and finally had an effect upon the young girl.

Not very quickly, however. After Solovtzoff's withdrawal Katérina Vassilievna was at first neither sad nor pensive, and before his withdrawal she had already become cold towards him; and, besides, she had accepted her father's counsel with the utmost calmness. Consequently, when, two months later, she grew sad, how could her father imagine that Solovtzoff, whom he had already forgotten, had anything to do with it?

"You seem sad, Katia."

"I? No, there is nothing the matter with me."

A week or two later the old man said to her:

"But are you not sick, Katia?"

"No, there is nothing the matter with me."

A fortnight later still:

"You must consult the doctor, Katia."

The doctor began to treat Katia, and the old man felt entirely easy again, for the doctor saw no danger, but only weakness and a little exhaustion. He pointed out, and correctly enough, that Katérina Vassilievna had led a very fatiguing life that winter,—every evening a party, which lasted till two, three, and often five o'clock in the morning. "This exhaustion will pass away." But, far from passing away, the exhaustion went on increasing.

Why, then, did not Katérina Vassilievna speak to her father? Because she was sure that it would have been in vain. He had signified his ideas in so firm a tone, and he never spoke lightly! Never would he consent to the marriage of his daughter to a man whom he considered wicked.

Katérina Vassilievna continued to dream, reading Solovtzoff's humble and despairing letters, and six months of such reading brought her within a step of consumption. And she did not drop a single word that could lead her father to think that he was responsible for her sickness. She was as tender with him as ever.

"You are discontented with something?"

"No, papa."

"Are you not in sorrow about something?"

"No, papa."

"It is easy to see that you are not; you are simply despondent, but that comes from weakness, from sickness. The doctor too said that it came from sickness."

But whence came the sickness? As long as the doctor considered the sickness trivial, he contented himself with attributing it to dancing and tight lacing; when he saw that it was growing dangerous, he discovered "the suspension of nervous nutrition," the *atrophia nervorum.*

V.

But, though the bigwig practitioners had agreed in the opinion that Mademoiselle Polosoff had *atrophia nervorum*, which had been developed by the fatiguing life that she led in spite of her natural inclinations towards reverie and melancholy, it did not take Kirsanoff long to see that the patient's weakness was due to some moral cause. Before the consultation of physicians the family doctor had explained to him all the relations of the patient: there were no family sorrows; the father and daughter were on very good terms. And yet the father did not know the cause of the sickness, for the family doctor did not know it; what did that mean? It was evident that the young girl had exercised her independence in concealing her illness so long even from her father, and in so acting through the whole of it that he could not divine its cause; the calmness of her replies at the medical consultation confirmed this opinion. She endured her lot with firmness and without any trace of exasperation. Kirsanoff saw that a person of such a character deserved attention and aid. His intervention seemed indispensable: to be sure, light some day might be thrown upon the matter in one way or another without him, but would it not then be too late? Consumption was about to set in, and soon all the care imaginable would be powerless. For two hours he had been striving to gain the patient's confidence; at last he had succeeded; now he had got

down to the heart of the matter, and had obtained permission to speak to her father.

The old man was very much astonished when he learned from Kirsanoff that it was love for Solovtzoff that was at the bottom of his daughter's sickness. How could that be? Katia had formerly accepted so coolly his advice to avoid Solovtzoff's society, and had been so indifferent when his visits ceased! How could she have begun to die of love on his account? Does any one ever die of love? Such exaltation did not seem at all probable to so calculating and practical a man. But he was made very anxious by what Kirsanoff said, and kept saying in reply: "It is a child's fancy and will pass away." Kirsanoff explained again and again, and at last made him understand that it was precisely because she was a child that Katia would not forget, but would die. Polosoff was convinced, but, instead of yielding, he struck the table with his fist and said with inflexible resolution: "Well, let her die! let her die! better that than be unhappy. For her as well as for me it will be less painful!" The same words that he had said to his daughter six months before. Katérina Vassilievna was right, therefore, in believing that it was useless to speak to her father.

"But why are you so tenacious on this point? I am willing to admit that the lover is bad, but is he as bad as death?"

"Yes! He has no heart. She is sweet and delicate; he is a base libertine."

And Polosoff painted Solovtzoff so black that Kirsanoff could say nothing in reply. In fact, how could he help agreeing with Polosoff? Solovtzoff was no other than the Jean whom we formerly saw at supper with Storechnikoff, Serge, and Julie. Hence it was evident that an honest young girl had better die than marry such a man. He would stifle and prey upon an honest woman. She had much better die.

Kirsanoff thought for a few minutes in silence, and then said:

"No, your arguments are not valid. There is no danger for the very reason that the individual is so bad. She will find it out, if you leave her to examine him coolly."

And Kirsanoff persisted in explaining his plan to Polosoff in more detail. Had he not himself said to his daughter that, if she should find out that the object of her love was unworthy, she would renounce him herself? Now he might be quite sure of such renunciation, the man loved being very unworthy.

"It will not do for me to tell you that marriage is not a thing of extreme importance if we view it without prejudice, though really, when a wife is unhappy, there is no reason why she should not separate from her husband. But you think that out of the question, and your daughter has been brought up with the same ideas; to you as well as to her marriage is an irrevocable contract, and, before she could get any other ideas into her head, life with such a man would kill her in much more painful fashion than consumption. Therefore we must consider the question from another standpoint. Why not rely on your daughter's good sense? She is not insane; far from it. Always rely on the good sense of any one whom you leave free. The fault in this matter is yours. You have put chains on your daughter's will; unchain her, and you will see her come to your view, if you are right. Passion is blind when it meets obstacles; remove the obstacles, and your daughter will become prudent. Give her the liberty to love or not to love, and she will see whether this man is worthy of love. Let him be her sweetheart, and in a short time she will dismiss him."

Such a way of viewing things was far too novel for Polosoff. He answered with some asperity that he did not believe in such twaddle, that he knew life too well, and that he saw too many instances of human folly to have any faith in humanity's good sense. Especially ridiculous would it be to trust to the good sense of a little girl of seventeen. In vain did Kirsanoff reply that follies are committed only in two cases,—either in a moment of impulse, or else when the individual is deprived of liberty and irritated by resistance. These ideas were Hebrew to Polosoff. "She is insane; it would be senseless to trust such a child with her own fate; rather let her die." He could not be swerved from his decision. But however firm an obstinate man may be in his ideas, if another man of more developed mind, knowing and understanding the circumstances better, labors constantly to free him of his error, the error will be overcome. Still, how long will the logical struggle last between the old father and the young doctor? Certainly today's conversation will not fail to have its effect on Polosoff, although it has not yet produced any; the old man will inevitably reflect upon Kirsanoff's words; and by renewing such conversations he may be recalled to his senses, although, proud of his experience, he deems himself infallible. In any case his conversion would be a long process, and delay was dangerous; a long delay would surely be fatal, and such delay was inevitable in view of all the circumstances. Therefore radical means must be resorted to. There was danger in so doing, it is true, but there was only danger, while any other course meant certain loss. The danger, though real, was not very grave: there was but one chance of loss against an infinity of chances of salvation. Kirsanoff saw in his patient a young girl of calm and silent firmness, and was sure of her. But had he a right to submit her to this danger? Yes, certainly.

"Very well," said Kirsanoff, "you will not cure her by the means within your power; I am going to treat her with my own. Tomorrow I will call another consultation."

Returning to his patient, he told her that her father was obstinate, more obstinate than he expected, and that it was necessary consequently to proceed energetically in opposition to him.

"No, nothing can be done," said the patient in a very sad tone.

"Are you sure?"

"Yes."

"Are you ready to die?"

"Yes."

"And if I decide to submit you to the risk of death? I have already spoken of this to you, but only to gain your confidence and show you that I would consent to anything in order to be useful to you: now I speak positively. Suppose I were to give you poison?"

"I have long known that my death is inevitable; I have but a few days more to live."

"And suppose it were tomorrow morning?"

"So much the better."

She spoke quite calmly.

When there is but one resource left,—to fall back on the resolve to die,—success is almost sure. When any one says to us: "Yield, or I die," we almost always yield; but such a resort cannot be played with without loss of dignity; if there is no yielding, then death must be faced.

He explained his plan to her, although it really needed no further elucidation.

VI.

Certainly Kirsanoff would never have made it a rule in such cases to resort to such a risk. It would have been much simpler to carry the young girl away and let her marry any one she might choose; but in this case the question was made very complex by the young girl's ideas and the character of the man whom she loved. With her ideas of the indissolubility of marriage she would continue to live with this base man, even though her life with him should prove a hell. To unite her to him was worse than to kill her. Consequently there was but one way left,—to cause her death or give her the opportunity of coming back to her right mind.

The next day the medical council reassembled. It consisted of half a dozen very grave and celebrated personages; else how could it have had any effect on Polosoff? It was necessary that he should regard its decree as final. Kirsanoff spoke; they listened gravely to what he said, and endorsed his opinion no less gravely; it could not be otherwise, for, as you remember, there was in the world a certain Claude Bernard, who lived in Paris and had a high opinion of Kirsanoff. Besides, Kirsanoff said things that—the devil take these urchins!—they did not understand at all; how, then, could they refuse their approval? Kirsanoff said that he had watched the patient very carefully, and that he entirely agreed with Carl Fœdorytch that the disease was incurable; now, the agony being very painful, and each additional hour of the patient's life being but another hour of suffering, he believed it to be the duty of the council to decree, for the sake of humanity, that the patient's sufferings should be at once terminated by a dose of morphine, from the effects of which she would never awaken.

To be continued.

Mormon Immorality.

Let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone.

He taught them to understand,
That the highest crimes may be written
In the highest law of the land.

Boyle O'Reilly on Wendell Phillips.

That the degrading position in which woman is placed by Mormonism has nothing to do with the crusade against it is shown by the decisions of Judge Zane under the Edmunds act that it is not cohabitation with several women that is illegal, but cohabitation with them under the form of marriage. The Mormon is superior to the Christian in this respect, as in many others; he is willing to recognize in society, and to treat as respectable the women who minister to his passions, while the Christian uses them, casts them aside, helps society to cover them with all possible odium, and crush out of them every vestige of womanhood,—aye, every vestige of humanity.

But the purity of our homes must be preserved, says Grover Cleveland; and, as Mormonism does not favor the love of one man for one woman, the laws in relation to it must be made more stringent. If the purity of our homes can be maintained, as St. Augustine affirms and as nearly all our statesmen admit, only through the existence of prostitution, is this boasted purity worth the cost? The strong arm of the Church and the State held over a man and woman *forcing* them to *love* each other eternally always reminds me of a picture I once saw in the comic paper, "Yankee Notions," in which a father was represented as taking his two boys out for a holiday, and holding a big stick over their heads, exclaiming: "Now, boys, I've brought you out to enjoy yourselves, and, if you don't enjoy yourselves, by Heavens, I'll cudgel you."

It is, to say the least, rather presumptuous of the president to pose as the defender of purity and of the respect due to woman with the record of his treatment of at least one woman known to the whole country.

If the degradation of woman were the subject that fired the enthusiasm of the crusaders against Mormonism, there would be no need to go to Utah to begin the stamping-out process. They might begin it here and now in New York and Boston, for we have here all the evils without any of the advantages of polygamy. The whole construction of society is such that women are obliged to sell themselves, some by the night and for bread, and some by the life-time for fine house, clothes, or a position in society. But no, the Mormons are immoral, and they must be purified, or wiped out of existence. Then they tell us, the Mormons are not only immoral, but are rebels against the laws of the land. This latter seems to be urged as a plea that is sufficient in itself to commend any action that may be taken against them. It certainly is a very strange plea to be put in by a nation that owes its very existence to rebellion against the laws of the land, and that has just seen a monstrous evil put down in blood that was once supported by the laws of the land.

That the evils of polygamy, as of any institution that recognizes property in woman, are great, we do not attempt to deny. But does monogamy as practised in the East imply any higher conception of the position of woman? Do not all the usages of society, do not the marriage-laws, the very words of the marriage-ceremony itself, look on woman as property, to be used or abused as may suit the caprice of her owner? Do not the lower wages paid to woman in all departments of work force her into accepting support at some man's hands, and as a consequence surrendering all right to herself? If property in one woman is legitimate, why not in ten or a hundred? If our system of marriage is so perfect, why are we so afraid of the influence of the Mormons? Is it because the women, who are now used by men, and crushed by them, may be induced to see a higher state in Mormonism than that in which they are now forced to live, may see in it a chance of becoming wives,—that is, respectable, labelled property,—instead of the disreputable commodities they are now considered to be? May not Mormonism be a better solution of the problem, after all, than our combined system of monogamy and prostitution, by which one portion of our women is kept pure, and the other condemned to dishonor, disease, and death, but which revenges itself on society by scattering broadcast this disease and death, and transmitting untold miseries to generations to come?

But whether the Mormons have a better or a worse system then ours is not the question, but whether they have a right to any system of marriage that suits them, that they maintain at their own cost, and that they do not force upon others. Here again the Mormon is superior to the Christian, as he is willing to rest his case on his powers to induce others to join him, while the Christian rushes to the ballot, and, if necessary, to the bullet, to force his system down the Mormon's throat.

It is not because we favor polygamy, but because we deny absolutely the right of the State to in any way interfere in these matters that our voice is raised in defence of the Mormons. We do believe in the eternal love of one man for one woman; but love, true love, can exist only between equals. Love and the sense of property cannot exist together. There can be neither true love nor true marriage until woman is industrially independent, until she is perfectly free to accept or reject the terms offered her. Then, and not till then, will true morality prevail; then, and not till then, will the union between man and woman be perfect, and all the degrading, revolting features of our present systems of monogamy and polygamy disappear from the face of the earth.

Then that sweet bondage, which is freedom's self,
And rivets with sensation's softest tie
The kindred sympathies of human souls,
Will need no fetters of tyrannic law.

GERTRUDE B. KELLY.

Is Anarchy Practicable?

The following address was recently delivered by M. Franklin before the New Haven Equal Rights Debating Club:

CHAIRMAN AND CITIZENS: If the resolution read: *Resolved, that Justice is practicable*, I am sure that nobody would speak on the negative, because every one of us holds that justice is not only a practicable virtue, but that it is the absolute foundation of a true human society. Why, then, speaking of the other resolution: *Anarchy is practicable*, which, as I will show you hereafter, is but another statement of the first one, has nobody volunteered to speak on the affirmative? Gentlemen, if there is no other reason, I simply say that it is because you neither understand what Anarchy is nor know what justice demands. Indeed, it would take too much time to state here all the erroneous definitions that have been given of these beautiful words. Many thousands of volumes of books could be written with the blood that has been and still continues to be wrongfully shed in the name of an imaginary justice. Gentlemen, the fact that from the earliest days of history up to our present day the greatest portion of the people has been groaning under the yoke of servitude and starvation, in spite of all changes of governments and in spite of all pretences of men to do justice, — I say that this fact proves more clearly than all the philosophies in the world that this word, justice, never was understood by those who claim to advocate it.

What is justice, then?

Gentlemen, if a man should ask me what to do in order to be just, and I should answer him with the plain and old adage: *Don't do unto others that which you would not that others should do unto you*, I am sure I would get the approval of every one of you (even of my State Socialistic friends). Now, let us see, what does man detest the most? Slavery, if I am not mistaken. Slavery, as Proudhon says, is the power to take from a man his will, his thought, his personality, and make him dependent upon others. It matters little whether he is dependent upon one or many persons; whether those persons represent a majority or a minority; whether such persons call themselves czars, priests, presidents, or lawyers; whether he is dependent for all his life or but for a part of it; whether he is absolutely dependent or in some certain respects only, — the man is in so much a slave as he is prohibited from using his own reason and faculties *practically*; and, as a matter of fact, nobody desires to be in such a position. Consequently, if we are to exercise justice, true justice, we must beware of making others dependent upon ourselves or upon our institutions, whether we call them States, Churches, or Legislatures. This is according to justice, and it is precisely *that* which Anarchy demands. The very name of such a state of society proves what I stated. Anarchy means the absence of *compulsory* rulership; hence, the absence of slavery, — Liberty.

But right here, I suppose my State Socialistic opponent will say: "Well, Liberty is a very good thing: in theory it is sublime, but how in practice? If bad men were not prohibited from committing crimes, they would steal, rob, and murder the honest ones. How would you treat, in the absence of government, the lunatics, lepers, etc.?" As an out-and-out Anarchist I answer that with the removal of the present slavery system we remove ninety-nine per cent. of all the existing crimes and evils; that when a man has free access to nature's gifts and equal opportunity to create wealth for himself, it is absolutely impossible for him to become a criminal, and consequently we have nothing to fear. But even from the standpoint of a more conservative Anarchist I should say that Anarchism is not at all antagonistic to voluntary associations for legitimate purposes. If the people are afraid of invasion, let them organize something like a mutual protective society; let them have, for instance, insurance companies like our fire insurance companies, etc. But in such a case they must certainly pay their own expenses and have no right to tax others who would not share their protective institutions. In short, we would never prohibit men from walking with sticks if they are afraid of dogs; but we would not compel people to walk with sticks who were not afraid of dogs.

In conclusion I would say that it would be foolish for slaves, as we are, to build up a system for the coming free generation. Our duty ought to be only to remove the obstacles to order, set men free, and create Liberty, and this *will* create order, because "Liberty is the *mother*, not the daughter, of order."

The Virgin and Her Children.

[Henri Rochefort in L'Intransigeant.]

Vereschagine is a well-known Russian painter, who recently took it into his head to exhibit his principal pictures at Vienna, among them being a a "Holy Family," a subject not altogether new. Only, being a faithful observer of the Gospels, which give Jesus Christ four brothers and as many sisters, — which transforms the pretended Virgin Mary into a sort of Mother Gigogne, — he has thought it his duty to represent this excellent matron surrounded by all her children.

If any one is guilty in the reproduction of this historical detail, it must be the Evangelists, Saints Luke and Matthew, who have enumerated for us all the members of Joseph's family. But with cunning trickery the Church, which in our early youth filled our ears with parables till we could not keep our eyes open and with puns which it attributed to God the Son, took good care not to entertain us with any account of this brood of children which makes the already problematical virginity of the aforesaid Mary a most vulgar joke.

In fact, even though she remained a virgin in spite of the coming into the world of her son Jesus, she evidently ceased to be one on giving birth to his brothers and sisters; and, supposing one of them to have been his elder, what becomes of her boasted purity at the time when the Holy Ghost conceived the idea of paying a little visit to the unfortunate woman of whom he made an adulterous wife.

Consequently Vereschagine's picture has stood the Austrian clergy on their heads. Cardinal Ganglbauer, archbishop of Vienna, perceived that the sight of this virgin ornamented with eight bantlings was an awkward thing for the doctrine the absolute truth of which he was proclaiming every day. With that ardor always to be noticed in officials whose salaries are threatened, he threw himself at the feet of the emperor to beg that this cup — that is, this painting — might be taken from him

It is easy to understand His Majesty's embarrassment.

To declare that Mary never had any other offspring than Christ was to give Saint Luke and Saint Matthew the lie in a way which perhaps they would not tolerate, no one being more vindictive than the Saints, who, seated at the right of the Eternal Father, have him always at hand to help them in their vengeance.

On the other hand, to admit to the vile populace that this immaculate virgin, whom oil always exhibits as young and timid, was made to reproduce herself ten times by her proprietor was to terribly disturb the minds of the poor, and consequently to subtract from the profits which the priests and bishops have always made out of the credulity of fools.

So the schismatic Vereschagine was notified that he must put away his work in short order, unless he would consent to suppress the children which he had added to Joseph's family. The artist called attention to the fact that these children belonged to history quite as much as the other, and that they even had the advantage over the other of being legitimate, while he was essentially a child of adultery. But this demolished the whole Christian legend, for in the flight into Egypt they always represent the Virgin and her husband accompanied by an only son and an ass. What had become of the other little ones? Had their holy mother got rid of them by simply packing them off to the foundling hospital?

That is the reason why, when they saw that arguments would not be enough to convince the painter, they sent him policemen, who, since the abolition of the Inquisition, have taken the place of the stake. Such is the way in which the Catholicism of the Austrians and the French shows its respect for the family. The Virgin had a number of children; they suppress all but one, under the pretext that they are good for nothing but to bring discredit on their mamma, whereas the one that is left has been for more than fifteen centuries a source of wealth, power, and honor to those cunning enough to exploit him.

O human depravity, who will give us the exact measure of thy depth.

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